



Asian Houbara Bustard

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Why in News

The government of Pakistan has issued special permits to the Emir of Qatar and nine other members of the royal family to hunt the Houbara Bustard, an internationally protected bird species.

Houbara Bustard

- Bustards are large, terrestrial birds that belong to several species, including some of the largest flying birds.
- **Two Distinct Species of Houbara Bustard:** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognises two distinct species found in:
 - North Africa (*Chlamydotis undulata*) and
 - Asia (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*).



- **Habitat of Asian Houbara**

- The population of the Asian houbara bustards extends from northeast Asia, across central Asia, the Middle East, and the Arabian Peninsula to reach the Sinai desert (Egypt).
- After breeding in the spring, the Asian bustards migrate south to spend the winter in Pakistan, the Arabian Peninsula and nearby Southwest Asia.
- **Reasons for Decline:** Poaching, unregulated hunting, along with degradation of its natural habitat.
- **IUCN Status-** Vulnerable

Source: IE